

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-7012

August 3, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, H-232
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner

With both the House and Senate in pro-forma session over the next month, we can immediately resolve the impasse over the Federal Aviation Administration, and put back to work the more than 74,000 Americans who have been furloughed. I stand ready to work with you to pass a clean extension of the FAA's current programs, while we resolve our differences.

To illustrate the importance of the FAA extension, I was recently contacted by a Las Vegas construction worker who was ecstatic after getting a job working on the new control tower at McCarran International Airport. He was furloughed days later. Imagine how devastated he felt. There are thousands of Americans like my constituent who are out of work because of this impasse.

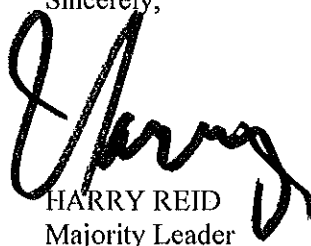
Upon their return home, I am certain that members of the House will hear from furloughed construction workers, airport managers, and FAA safety employees just as I have. With the livelihoods of many working families at stake, we should not allow this situation to remain unaddressed for weeks until Congress returns in early September.

We must resolve our differences through the normal legislative process. In the meantime, we need a clean, short term extension to get these people back to work. There is bipartisan support for this position. My colleague, Republican Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison said it best on the Senate floor yesterday: "We should not shut down the FAA because of a rider put on the extension of the FAA legislation that has not been negotiated. It is not honorable for the House to send an extraneous amendment."

Just as we found compromise in recent days, we both know there is a path forward to end this impasse. I am personally willing to compromise on the essential air services issue during negotiations on the final bill, in order to pass a clean extension. It is also my hope that Republicans will relent on the controversial policy change that is narrowly targeted to benefit just one airline. I urge you to help us bring back to work more than 4,000 FAA employees – and the 70,000 contractors and construction workers – while we arrive at a consensus.

We cannot afford to delay any longer. I am ready to work with you to pass a clean extension immediately.

Sincerely,


HARRY REID
Majority Leader